

## Message Text

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ACTION ORM-02

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R 051423Z FEB 76

FM AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2189

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: VIETNAMESE CHILDREN IN DENMARK

REF: STATE 024233, 75 COPENHAGEN 2190

1. LANSON ROSS VISITED EMBASSY JANUARY 30, REQUESTED ASSISTANCE IN OBTAINING NAMES OF DANISH OFFICIALS HE SHOULD CONTACT CONCERNING VIETNAMESE ORPHANS CURRENTLY IN DENMARK. ROSS SAID HIS ORGANIZATION WAS PREPARED TO ASSIST IN ARRANGING FOR A TRANSFER OF THE MONTAGNARD ORPHANS (APPROXIMATELY 150 OF THE 190 TOTAL; FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY, INC. HAS NO INTEREST IN THE 40-ODD ETHNIC VIETNAMESE) FROM DENMARK TO A CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY (MR. ROSS MENTIONED NICARAGUA OR COSTA RICA), WHERE THEY COULD PURSUE THEIR TRADITIONAL WAY OF LIFE IN A MORE FAMILIAR GEOGRAPHICAL AND CLIMATIC SETTING. ACCORDING TO ROSS, HIS ORGANIZATION CAN ARRANGE FOR A RESETTLEMENT OFFER FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF DENMARK. THE EMBASSY BRIEFED ROSS ON THE CURRENT SITUATION OF THE CHILDREN AND GAVE HIM THE NAMES OF THE OFFICIALS AND OTHER PERSONALITIES INVOLVED WITH THE PROBLEM.

2. IN CONNECTION WITH AN EARLIER REQUEST BY TWO AMERICAN FAMILIES FOR ASSISTANCE IN ADOPTING TWO OF THE ORPHANS, 75 COPENHAGEN 2190 PROVIDED DEPARTMENT WITH SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE CHILDREN. SINCE THEN THE  
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DANISH AUTHORITIES HAVE SEPARATED THE MONTAGNARDS FROM

THE ETHNIC VIETNAMESE AND HAVE PUT THE MONTAGNARDS IN A SPECIAL SCHOOL UNDER SUPERVISION OF HOLGER REEDTZ-FUNDER, VICE SECRETARY GENERAL OF DANISH RED CROSS. FUNDER WILL SUPERVISE THE CENTER ON LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM THE RED CROSS.

3. THE ETHNIC VIETNAMESE REMAIN IN A NORTH ZEALAND SCHOOL UNDER THE CARE OF HENNING BECKER (WHO APPARENTLY HAS NO FURTHER INTEREST IN THE MONTAGNARDS). THE DANISH GOVERNMENT IS ENGAGED IN A STRUGGLE TO REMOVE BECKER, A GERMAN CITIZEN, FROM THE PICTURE. A PRELIMINARY REPORT TO SOCIAL AFFAIRS MINISTER EVA GREDAL STATES THAT THE STRONG ISOLATION IMPOSED ON THE CHILDREN BY BECKER WILL RESULT IN PSYCHIC INJURY WHICH WILL MAKE THEIR LATER SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT MORE DIFFICULT, WHETHER IT BE IN VIETNAM OR DENMARK. EMBASSY EXPECTS THE ISSUE TO BE RESOLVED IN NEAR FUTURE WHILE REMOVAL OF BECKER FROM THE PICTURE WOULD ALSO MAKE EASIER THE REPATRIATION OF THE CHILDREN TO VIETNAM, AN MFA OFFICIAL TOLD AN EMBOFF IN CONFIDENCE THAT NONE OF THE CHILDREN WANTED REPATRIATION, AND NONE WOULD BE FORCED TO RETURN TO VIETNAM. NEVERTHELESS, THE OFFICIAL POLICY OF THE DANES REMAINS ONE OF EVENTUAL REPATRIATION. ACCORDING TO THE MFA, A "VIETNAMESE DELEGATION" WILL ARRIVE IN DENMARK SOON TO DISCUSS REPATRIATION.

4. ROSS INFORMED EMBASSY LATER ON JANUARY 30 THAT HE HAD CALLED ON MFA SECTION CHIEF H.J. ASSING. FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY PRESIDENT LARRY WARD CALLED ON ASSING IN DECEMBER 1975, ALSO TO DISCUSS THE VIETNAMESE ORPHANS. CONFIRMING WHAT HE TOLD WARD IN DECEMBER, ASSING INFORMED ROSS THAT A LETTER HAD BEEN DRAFTED FOR TRANSMITTAL TO FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY INDICATING THAT THE DANISH GOVERNMENT WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE OFFER TO SETTLE THE CHILDREN IN ANOTHER COUNTRY. ROSS LEFT COPENHAGEN ON JANUARY 31, APPARENTLY WITHOUT DISCUSSING HIS PROPOSALS WITH ANY OTHER OFFICIALS.

5. THE ATTITUDE OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT TOWARD FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY'S RATHER NAIVE PROPOSAL IS NOT SURPRISING, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF ROSS'S STATEMENT THAT NICARAGUA'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MRS. SOMOZA WAS ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN THE WELFARE OF THE ORPHANS. AMID RUMORS OF MISHANDLING OF THE CHILDREN BY BECKER, THE PROBLEM HAS DRAGGED ON FOR SOME TIME WITHOUT RESOLUTION. THE GOVERNMENT RISKS CRITICISM FROM THE LEFT IF IT DOES NOT DEAL SERIOUSLY WITH THE POSSIBILITY OF REPATRIATION, WHILE ON THE OTHER HAND IT WILL MOST CERTAINLY RECEIVE CRITICISM FROM MANY SOURCES IF IT REPATRIATES THE CHILDREN AGAINST THEIR WILL. IN ANY CASE THE PROPOSAL

OF FOOD FOR THE HUNGRY HAD LITTLE OR NO CHANCE OF BEING  
CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY BY THE DANES.  
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